

# Bethany Bernasconi Named 2012 New Hampshire Teacher of The Year

Commissioner of Education Virginia M. Barry, Ph.D., announced that Bethany Bernasconi, a science teacher at Windham High School, is the 2012 New Hampshire Teacher of the Year. In receiving this award, Mrs. Bernasconi becomes New Hampshire's candidate for National Teacher of the Year.

"Selecting a Teacher of the Year is an exceptional way to celebrate the many outstanding and dedicated people teaching in New Hampshire schools," said Commissioner Barry. "The NH Teacher of the Year isn't the best teacher in the State, but is meant to represent the many excellent teachers devoted to the highest level of student learning in their classrooms. Bethany will serve as an ambassador for all the outstanding teachers in NH."

Bethany Bernasconi has been teaching for eight years, the last three at Windham High School. The selection committee recognized her passion for students, the excitement she brings to the classroom and her ability to reach every student. She possesses boundless commitment to support and guide the successes of her students and colleagues. Her professional and personal standards will inspire NH educators to seek the best possible ideals on behalf of our students.

Bethany wrote in her application, "I bring to the classroom the recognition that each child is a whole and that I must find a way to make this living world personal and meaningful to them so that they too fall in love with the ideas of its complexity, its beauty, and its preservation. I am a trail guide and translator; helping students to navigate a journey of self-discovery and of the world. I strive to know my students because only when I understand the whole child can I help them to achieve their dreams and goals, only then can I hope to create for them a safe environment where meaningful learning can take place."

Bethany Bernasconi is described by her principal Thomas Murphy as, "bright, articulate, and most resourceful." He went on to say, "Mrs. Bernasconi brings an excitement to her classroom that is infectious. Her passion for teaching inspires her students to ask thought-provoking questions in a nurturing environment. Her students will constantly comment on the rigor of Mrs. Bernasconi's class as they consistently rise to the challenge set before them. Mrs. Bernasconi exemplifies great teaching; always putting the needs of her students at the forefront of every class."

Each year, New Hampshire schools take part in the State and National Teacher of the Year Program. The National Teacher of the Year Program, sponsored by the ING Foundation and Target, is a project of the Council of Chief State School Officers, in partnership with the University of Phoenix Foundation and People to People Ambassador Programs. The National Teacher of the Year Program began in 1952 and continues as the oldest, most prestigious national honors program that focuses public attention on excellence in teaching. In New Hampshire, Hannaford Supermarkets is proud to partner with the Department of Education to sponsor the New Hampshire Teacher of the Year program. As a company, Hannaford is committed to enriching the quality of life in the communities they serve. One way to do this is by supporting the Teacher of the Year Program that recognizes the significant contributions made by the many dedicated professionals who choose to make teaching their calling.

New Hampshire Teacher of the Year Finalists are: August Carlson a music teacher at the Adeline C. Marston School in Hampton, Caroline Carr is a mathematics teacher at the Whitefield School, Paula Rushia is a fifth grade teacher at the Swasey Central School, and Jennifer Wilson-Tucker is a Language Arts teacher at Keene Middle School.

In early December, these finalists and the 2012 NH Teacher of the Year will be invited to a "Leadership in Education Banquet" to celebrate their accomplishments along with other distinguished educators in the State. At this banquet they will receive a classroom grant from Hannaford Supermarkets.

The selection process for the 2012 NH Teacher of the Year program was coordinated by a committee including: Hannaford Supermarkets Store Manager, Jean-Marie Beauchemin; Bedford School Board Vice Chair, Cindy Chagnon; Virginia A. Clifford, Bureau of Credentialing, NH Department of Education; NH State Board of Education Chair, John Lyons; NH Association of School Principals Executive Director, Peggy McAllister; 2011 NH Teacher of the Year, Angie Miller; and 2010 NH Teacher of the Year, Eric Nash

For more information about this and other award/recognition programs coordinated through the Department of Education log on to [www.education.nh.gov/recognition/index.htm](http://www.education.nh.gov/recognition/index.htm) or contact Lori Temple, Public Information Officer at (603) 271-6646 or e-mail [Lori.Temple@doe.nh.gov](mailto:Lori.Temple@doe.nh.gov).

To contact Windham High School please call (603) 537-2400.

*Every day a New Hampshire teacher makes a difference in the life of a child. Every year the NH Department of Education honors outstanding teachers who make their communities, profession, and the world a better place.*